

**Are you
prepared?**

**Do you have
an
Emergency
Plan?**



City of Chicago

Richard M. Daley, Mayor



www.alertchicago.com

City of Chicago

Office of Emergency Management and Communications

Guide To Tornado Preparedness



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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS



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Tornados can Occur In **CHICAGO!**



Each year, people around the country are killed or seriously injured by tornados despite advance warning.

The following preparedness information, combined with timely severe weather alerts, could help save lives or prevent injuries.

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What is a Tornado?

- A tornado is a violent, rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground with winds in excess of 250 miles per hour.
- Most tornado damage paths are less than 100 yards wide and a couple of miles long, but can be up to a mile wide and more than 60 miles long.

Are you familiar with the terms used
to describe a tornado threat?

◆ Tornado Watch – When a Tornado Watch is issued by the National Weather Service, tornadoes are possible in our area. Watch the sky and listen to the radio or television for more information from Chicago officials. Remain alert for approaching storms and be prepared to take immediate shelter.

◆ Tornado Warning — When a Tornado Warning is issued by the National Weather Service, it means that a tornado has been spotted or indicated by weather radar. You should take immediate shelter! Turn on a battery-operated radio or television and wait for instructions from Chicago officials and listen for sirens.



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Can I Outrun A Tornado?

Imagine you're in your car driving on Lake Shore Drive or the Dan Ryan Expressway on a sunny afternoon, when all of a sudden, greenish clouds start to form. It begins to get dark, winds suddenly start to increase, large hail falls and you hear a loud roar. What do you do?

Your instinct tells you to continue to drive, when in fact you should pull over and seek immediate shelter. But never try to outrun a tornado while in your vehicle.

**NEVER TRY TO
OUTRUN A TORNADO!**



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Are you prepared for a Tornado?

The City of Chicago has a warning system to alert people who are outdoors when impending tornado danger is possible.

There are sirens throughout the city. When activated, the sirens emit a loud wailing noise that goes up and down for three minutes.

Individuals who hear the sirens while outdoors should seek immediate indoor shelter inside a sturdy building away from windows and glass.

When the threat has passed, the siren will emit a steady wailing signal for three minutes.

The city conducts a 20-second test tone the first Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. Note - The test tone you hear is at lower pitch volume than the actual alert sound.



Click here to hear



All Clear Alarm



Click here to download Plug-in for [Windows Media Player](#)

To be better prepared:

- Build a kit with a portable radio with a weather channel frequency and other items.
- Have a tornado disaster plan for your home, work, school and while on the go.
- Learn where to get information about how to prepare and what to do if a tornado is threatening.
- Conduct drills that use pre-designated "safe place" so you know where to take cover when a tornado warning is issued.

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If you're at home, work, or on-the-go what does it take to be Ready for a Tornado?

Build A Kit

Home Kit:

- Food
- Water
- Manual can opener
- Essential medications
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Radio with extra batteries
- Cash in small denominations
- A copy of your family plan
- Specialty Items

On the Go Kit:

- Food
- Bottle of water
- Comfortable shoes
- First aid kit
- Essential medications
- Flashlight
- Radio
- Whistle
- Paper, pen, and tape
- Cash in small denominations
- Recent family photo



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If you're at home, work, or on-the-go what does it take to be Ready for a Tornado?

Make a Plan

- Pre-designate your "safe place" to take shelter should a Tornado Warning be issued.
- Learn the protection position (on knees bent forward with fingers locked behind head).
- Establish a "reunion location" (should family members get separated).
- Practice drills with family frequently.
- Keep a list of important phone numbers
 - > Out of State Contacts
 - > Doctor
 - > Pharmacist
 - > Work Numbers



The Protection Position

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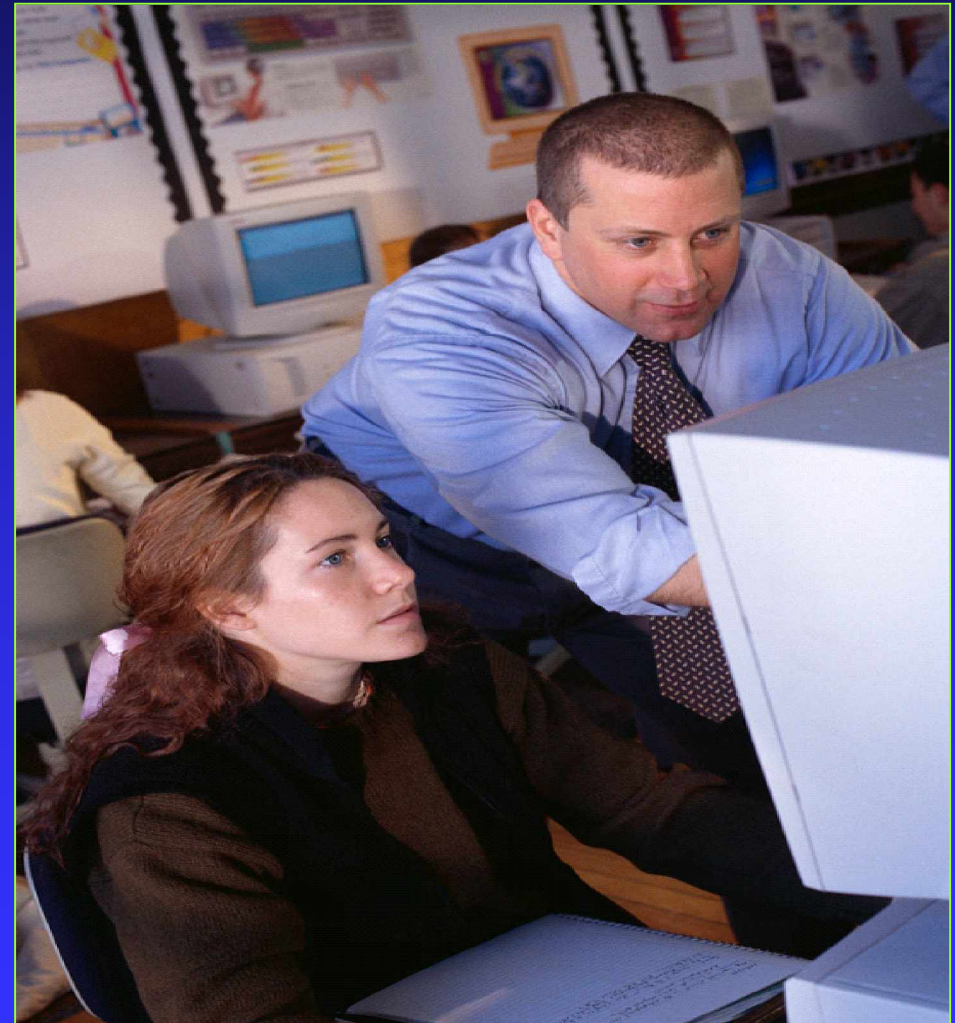
If you're at home, work, or on-the-go what does
it take to be Ready for a Tornado?

Get Information

Most tornadoes occur in the spring, but they can occur during any month of the year.

Get information about which disasters could affect your area and when they could occur.

Should a disaster occur, it is important that you know where you should go for safety and how you should prepare.



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Have you Planned Ahead?

- Does your family, employer or school have an Emergency Action Plan and conduct frequent drills?
- Have you identified a pre-designated shelter location (basements offer the best protection)?
- Do you have a portable radio and extra batteries with a weather channel in your shelter?
- Have you learned the protection position?
- Have you determined an alternate means to notify people in the event of power failure (hard-line phone, cell phone, and/or portable public address system)?
- Have you advised your family that they may need to stay at work or school beyond regular hours until threatening weather has passed?
- Have you posted your Emergency Evacuation Plan on each floor that maps out evacuation routes and shelter areas?



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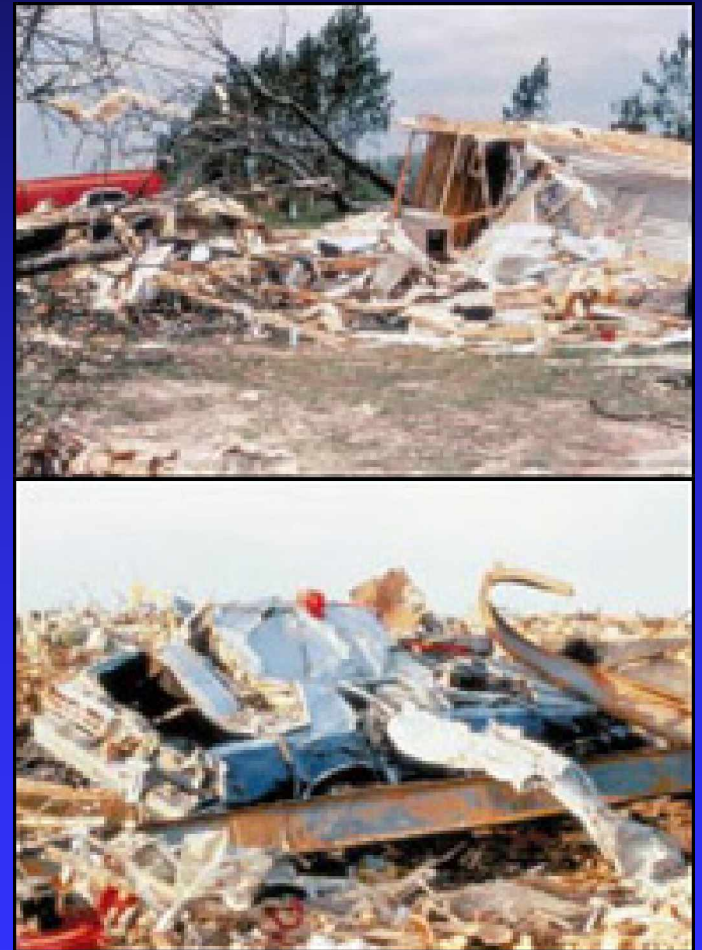
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Do you know what to do when a Tornado Warning is issued or sirens are sounded while you're at home, work, or school?

- Move to a pre-designated "safe place" such as a basement. If a basement is not available, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest possible floor.
- Stay away from windows.
- Brace yourself under a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table.
- Get down in the protection position.
- Listen to the radio and/or television for further weather information and instructions from Chicago officials.



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Do you know what to do if you're outside or in your vehicle during a tornado?

- Never remain in a vehicle during a tornado.
- Take immediate cover. Move to a sturdy shelter or nearby building.
- If no sturdy shelter or nearby building is available, lie flat in a low area.
- Stay clear of any objects that may cause harm such as trees, cars or other potential projectiles.
- Avoid taking cover in viaducts, bridges or bus shelters.
- Be aware of flying debris.
- Stay out of damaged houses and buildings.



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While you can't prevent tornados from happening, you can be better prepared for them. Protect the people who depend on you by being prepared and informed.

“Building a Culture of Preparedness”

Click Here

[For additional preparedness information and historical facts](#)